

"The Three Young Crusoes" is all about three children wrecked on a fabulous West India island, what they saw there and what they learned by the experience.

In Billy the Boy Naturalist, reviewed in an earlier number of TORREYA, the author's gift for seeing things from the boy's point of view was noted as one of the merits of the book. In the last three volumes this gift is somewhat obscured by a mass of quotations, maxims, and epigrams, selected and composed with a catholicity of taste that would stun the average boy. Epigrams and maxims too, however piquant to grown-ups may not be always *virginibus puerisque*.

Writing books like these, even for children, involves an astonishing willingness for self-revelation on the author's part, for it sweeps away some of the reticences of our Anglo-Saxon tradition. While most of us may have passed through the phases of youth upon which the author dwells with such particularity, few have the courage to disclose them. To alter slightly a phrase of Stevenson, who in rare degree understood writing for children, some of us might think that while we are quite capable of writing books like these we prefer not to write them. But the preferences of adults with Anglo-Saxon reticences, who may object to the books, is not likely to weigh much against them so far as children are concerned. And for young people there is in them an undeniable fund of information on natural history.

THE EDITOR.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

OCTOBER 29, 1919

The meeting was held in the Morphological Laboratory of the New York Botanical Garden at 3:30 P.M., Vice-President Barnhart presiding. There were twenty-eight persons present.

The minutes of the meeting held October 14 were read and approved. Dr. Isaac Levin, Mr. Arthur H. Thomas, were nominated for membership.

Dr. Britton spoke of the completion of the new greenhouse presented to the New York Botanical Garden by Messrs. Daniel

and Murry Guggenheim, and suggested that the Club hold a Field meeting at the time of the formal opening of this green house, Saturday, November 8, and also at the lectures to be held the three following Saturday afternoons at the green house. On the motion of Dr. Britton, the chairman of the Field Committee was directed to make the announcements in the Bulletin of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Mrs. Britton mentioned communications which she and the Secretary of the Club had received from a former Secretary, Mrs. B. LeBrun, regarding the sale of certain water colors done by Mrs. Ranseur. These illustrations were exhibited to the Club.

Prof. Harper spoke of the opportunity to hear a lecture on the flora of New Zealand in view of the fact that the program committee had secured the consent of Professor A. H. Cockayne, of the Agricultural Department of New Zealand, to lecture on the Tuesday evening meeting, November 11.

The Secretary read a letter from Mr. George L. Moxley, of 5417 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif., regarding the exchange of the Club's publications for specimens which he was now collecting and preparing. The letter was referred to Dr. Britton with power.

The election of Dr. Levin and Mr. Thomas followed.

Dr. Britton exhibited an interesting specimen of a species of Sedge, which consisted of a fruiting mass subtended by the involucre bracts of a leaf. This sedge, a *Scirpodendron*, a native of the Philippines and other Eastern Islands, is probably the largest sedge in the world.

Mrs. Britton spoke of the late blooming of *Rhododendron catawbiense* in the New York Botanical Garden and stated that the Japanese quince and lilacs were also in bloom. Dr. Harper also noted that pears were in bloom at the Columbia campus.

Dr. Marshall A. Howe, in directing attention to several bouquets of dahlias, remarked that the Botanical Garden's dahlia border was enjoying an unusually successful season, due perhaps to the fact that the rainfall during the summer and autumn had been about five inches in excess of the normal. About 340

varieties, represented by somewhat more than 600 plants, had reached the blossoming stage. Attention was directed especially to the variety *Juarezii* which is supposed to represent rather accurately the original "cactus" dahlia as first known in Europe in 1872.

The Scientific program as announced was as follows: Dr. John H. Barnhart, "Wooden Flowers"; Dr. William A. Merrill, "Notes on Fungi"; Dr. Francis W. Pennell, "Field Excursions"; Dr. P. A. Rydberg "Notes on *Philotria*." The following extracts were furnished by the speakers.

"Dr. Barnhart exhibited two fine specimens of 'wooden flowers' recently presented to the museum of the New York Botanical Garden by Dr. L. A. Wailes of New Orleans, and remarked upon the cause of these curious malformations. They are found in Central America, where they are known to the natives as 'flor de madera' or 'flor de infierno.' They may be classified as galls and are perhaps the only known kind of galls produced by parasitic flowering plants; being the modification produced in host-tissues by the base of a mistletoe of the genus *Phoradendron*, this modification persisting after the parasite had dropped from the host. Several good published illustrations of the structure were shown."

"Collecting Fungi in Virginia."

"During the latter half of July 1919, the writer made a tour through parts of southwest Virginia, returning by way of Blue Ridge Springs, Bedford City, Lynchburg, and Falls Church. A drought early in the month was followed by over a week of rain, which brought out an unusually large and diversified crop of fungi. These were studied and collected for several days in the vicinity of Blacksburg, Virginia, at an elevation of 2,200 feet, where the woodlands are mostly oak-chestnut and the rocks Trenton limestones or subcarboniferous shales and sandstones.

"Trees were attacked by destructive polypores, among them *Bjerkandera adusta*, *Coriolus versicolor*, *Daedalea quercina*, *Elfvigia lobata*, *Fulvifomes Robiniae*, *Grifolia Berkeleyi*, *Laetiporus speciosus*, *Porodaedalea Pini*, *Trametes robiniophila* and *Tyromyces Spraguei*. The most abundant of these were prob-

ably *Fulvifomes Robiniae* on black locust and *Elfvigia lobata* on various species of oak, hickory, and maple.

"Of the fleshy forms that were eaten, the following might be mentioned: *Chanterel Chantarellus*, *Craterellus cornucopioides*, *Lycoperdon cyathiforme*, *L. gemmatum*, *Cortinarius semisanguineus*, *Vaginata plumbea*, *Lactaria volema*, *L. corrugis*, *Hydnum repandum*, *Boletus bicolor*, *Pluteus cervinus*, and *Hypomyces lactifluorum*. Those specially avoided were species of *Venenarius* and brilliant clusters of *Clitocybe illudens*."

"One of the most interesting observations was made at Lynchburg at the corner of Tenth and Harrison Streets. Here stood an English Walnut tree over a hundred years old, which measured seven feet in circumference and about sixty feet in height, and had borne quantities of good nuts until about 1915. Since then, however, the nuts had been diseased and for the most part worthless. Upon closer examination, some of the green fruits hanging on the tree were seen to be partially blackened, while many entirely blackened and decayed fruits were on the ground. This walnut blight, *Bacterium juglandis*, has been known since 1900 on the Pacific coast, where it is considered a most serious disease and one not amenable to treatment."

"Dr. Pennell gave a résumé of the work done by the Field Committee in connection with the summer's field excursions. He pointed out some of the difficulties of the situation and urged a more hearty cooperation of the members of the club in the future. The club voted to refer the questions to Dr. Pennell with the request that he make further recommendations for consideration at the Annual meeting."

"Dr. Rydberg presented some notes on *Philotria*. In the eastern species, the staminate flowers have been described as having oblong or elliptical petals and break loose from the short pedicel to float on the surface during pollination. Mr. R. Hitchcock of Ithaca had sent in some specimens collected in Lake Cayuga, in which the petals are narrowly linear and the pedicels elongate so that the flower reaches the surface before it breaks loose. In these respects the specimens agreed with *P. iowensis* Wylie, which hitherto had been found only in Iowa

and in a pond near Denver, Colorado. Some peculiarities in the pistillate flowers were also pointed out."

Adjournment followed.

B. O. DODGE,
Secretary.

NEWS ITEMS

At a dinner for botanists given by the Missouri Botanical Garden during the St. Louis meeting two rather unusual vegetables were served. *Dasheen en cassorole* and *Arracacha*. The latter is a Venezuelan plant, *Arracacia xanthorrhiza*, introduced through the Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction Office at Washington, and said to be the first grown in the United States and served at a public banquet. The dasheen is *Colocasia esculenta*, a more familiar plant, grown commercially from South Carolina to Florida and Texas, but not yet widely known near New York.

The Ecological Society of America elected the following officers at the Christmas meetings. *President*, Barrington Moore; *Vice-President*, G. E. Nichols; and *Secretary-Treasurer*, A. O. Weese. The president was reelected and, after a several month's trip to the Southwest and California, will be at 925 Park Avenue, N. Y. after March 27.

Dr. R. M. Harper, after a short visit to New York, has returned to Alabama. His address until further notice will be University, Ala.

Dr. B. E. Livingston, of Johns Hopkins University, has been appointed Permanent Secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He will retain his position at the University and spend one or two days a week at Washington.

Mr. Robert Cushman Murphy has just returned from the islands off the coast of Peru. While most of his material is zoological he collected all the flowering plants known from the islands. Some are absolute deserts, a few with only lichens and mosses, others with as many as 15 flowering plants. One island contains a fringe of a single beach species along the coast, then for 1000 feet in elevation nothing but bare rock and soil, and finally a single specimen of an Acacia-like tree, not over 3 feet high. The specimens from these unique islands have been presented to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.